(c) It is not possible to detect Congenital blindness at prenatal stage. However, proper antenantal care under Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme is provided to all pregnant women to prevent blindness due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency is new born children and improving maternal care at the Community Level by providing training to Traditional Birth Attendants (Dai).

Call for strike against Modvat Modalities by Textile Processing Houses

*445. SHRI GUNDAPPA KORWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that several textile processing houses have called for an indefinite strike to protest against MODVAT modalities which have recently been announced by Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) It has been reported that some textile processors in Surat, Hyderabad and Amritsar have gone on strike in protest reportedly against the proposed levy of basic excise duty on textile fabrics. Representations have been received by the Government from textile processors and others suggesting some changes. These are under consideration.

Constitution of the Expert Committee on Tobacco

*446. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representation on misgivings of farmers on the constitution of the Expert Committee on tobacco;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to address these misgivings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) to (c) An Expert Committee was constituted on 26.7.1995 to undertake a comparative study on the economics of tobacoo use interalia examining the tax revenue and foreign exchange earnings, consumer expenditure on the one hand and the cost of tertiary level medical care facilities for treatment of tobacco related diseases etc. on the other. After the Committee was set up, there was a demand for inclusion of representatives of Trade Unions, farmers, tobacco growers' associations, beedi workers and the employees' federation on the Committee. Since the Government does not in any way propose to ban either the cultivation of tobacco or production of tobacco items, the proposal was not agreed to as the Expert Committee had specific terms of reference unconnected with these issues. On the insistence, however, of the tobacco growers, farmers and trade unions, a view was taken that an opportunity should be provided to them to formulate their views singly or jointly and place them before a designated officer who would assimilate and categorise them for the consideration of Government. An order to that effect was issued on 30.11.199S extending mis opportunity to representatives of all the major groups. A copy of Order is inclosed as Statements.

Statement

Order Stating the representatives for presenting their case before the export Committee on tobacco

No. T-16017/1/95-PH
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi-El
30th November, 1995.

ORDER

It has been decided to provide an opportunity to the representatives indicated below to express their views on the proposed legislation which seeks inter-alia to ban the advertisement of tobacco products and regulate the labelling thereof. The rep~~resent~~atives are requested.to formulate theirviews singly or jointly and to place them before the Deputy Director General of Health Services, Dr. A. K. Kundu who would assimilate the same and bring them to the notice of the Government for action as deemed necessary.